

Thanksgiving DeLIVERy

Nutrition Notes by Natalie

Here we are again, November is upon us. By now the leaves have fallen and the Trick-or-Treaters have retired for the season. It's time to gear up for a grand Thanksgiving feast chock-full of delectable foods and family traditions. Turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes - the staple foods of this particular holiday. But nothing says Thanksgiving like the infamous gravy!

Now I don't know about you, but in our family the gravy is the most important part of the meal. It can't be lumpy, it mustn't be too runny, the wrong color, too salty, or too bland. Gravy can make or break the Thanksgiving meal. The funny thing is, I cannot stand the thought of having it touch my food! But I am the cook and the show must go on, with a little help that is. Fortunately for me, I have Papa Chuck, the gravy master.

So what's in Papa Chuck's gravy? Well, you know those little packages found inside the cavity of your Thanksgiving bird, therein lies the secret to exceptional gravy! You see, Papa Chuck doesn't like to waste anything so he uses it all (well except for the kidneys, he eats those whole!). The gizzard, neck, heart, and liver that come wrapped up inside, like a special delivery package deep within the cavity of this bird, are all in there. It starts with a rolling boil and a dash of salt on the stovetop. These "giblets" are then minced and set aside until the turkey drippings are available. With a dash of salt, pepper, garlic and a splash of kitchen bouquet the gravy starts to take shape. The final product....amazing gravy made from all natural ingredients, including liver, which ironically his wife has a strong dislike for!

Like many here at Senior Nutrition liver is a bit "controversial." I think if my family was in the kitchen seeing what goes into the gravy, they might be hesitant to eat it as well. Liver is one of those foods you either love or hate and there's really no

In-between. In fact, when it was served here at Senior Nutrition in recent months, there was only a handful of people that showed up to celebrate its consumption, while the majority opted to cancel their home delivery or eat elsewhere that day. Definitely a defining day for the program. But what if we could find a way to appease both sides? A transport vehicle that is acceptable to all (well, except me). Enter Papa Chuck's gravy.

Maybe that's the key to this organ meat, less is more. I mean, has anyone really considered what function the liver performs in the body? Sure it is packed full of vitamins and minerals like zinc, copper, iron, and Vitamin C, but, it also contains high levels of pesticides (from animal feed if not fed an organic diet) and Vitamin A which in large quantities can be toxic. I guess it's all in what you are used to. Some grew up on it, others did not or just never developed the taste for it.

For those of you that hate liver, don't worry, we took a vote and it won't be appearing on the menu here at Senior Nutrition in the foreseeable future. But do not despair, for those diehard liver lovers, there is still a light at the end of the tunnel. Liver is fairly easy to prepare for yourself at home. Dredge in a bit of flour and pan fry with butter or olive oil and viola you have dinner. For those of you that have written liver off, give it a second chance and find a recipe for gravy this year Papa Chuck style. You never know, maybe you'll like it in small doses like my family does (although truth be told, I do not think they know it's in there).

So whether you love it or you hate it, consider trying it in gravy and finding a way to make peace with this organ meat. Use it for all its health benefits but in a quantity that doesn't overwhelm you or present a health hazard. So hop on the gravy train, a vehicle that can make liver more acceptable to all.

